

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING A RESPONSIVE LOCAL EMERGENCY SYSTEM
(A Short Practitioner's Guide)

KNOW THE BASICS

There are numerous laws, regulations, policies and other procedural standards that apply to the delivery of behavioral health emergency services. All emergency service practitioners and service partners should have access to this information, and should receive training on these requirements and how they apply in the real-life situations they face every day. Planning, service delivery and problem-solving cannot occur without this basic knowledge.

COMMUNICATE

It takes many people and organizations to implement an effective emergency response system, including community service providers, law enforcement agencies, court officials, public and private hospitals and emergency departments, etc. Timely and effective ongoing communication between leadership and staff of these organizations is essential and should be supported.

KNOW YOUR COLLEAGUES

It is important to know the people and organizations you are working with and how these partners view their roles in the delivery of emergency response services. Different agencies have different objectives, capabilities, limitations and constraints that may affect emergency service delivery. Understanding these perspectives is essential to building strong working partnerships.

PRACTICE A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Collaboration is more than just meeting together. It means working constructively to build consensus, develop shared goals, and find solutions that all parties can support.

PUT CONSUMERS FIRST

Focus on the people you serve, and what these consumers need. This gives everyone some “common ground” and can make it easier to work together and solve problems.

BE PROACTIVE

Local emergency response procedures need constant re-evaluation and refinement as changes occur in statutes and policies, programs and providers, available resources, etc. Try to anticipate these changes and address them early. When systemic problems arise, try to resolve them quickly. Don't let problems interfere with your communication or collaboration with other service partners.

INVOLVE CONSUMERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

Consumers and family members have vitally important perspectives on the delivery of behavioral health emergency services. Involve consumers and family members at all times to help improve emergency service delivery.